(c) Government has already introduced Technology Upgradation Fund Schemes (TUFS) which is in operation since 1-4-99. The scheme provide a reimbursement of 5% point on the interest charged by the lending agency on a project of benchmarked technology upgradation in conformity with the scheme. This Scheme covers all sectors of textiles and jute industries including garments.

Reducing Excise Duty of Textiles Exports

1533. SHRI YADLAPATI VENKAT RAO: Will the Minister of TEXTILES be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government propose to reduce excise duty on textiles to boost exports;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) the recommendations made in this connection by the N.K. Singh Committee on Textiles?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF TEXTILES (SHRI BASANAGOUDA R. PATIL): (a) to (c) The Steering Group constituted under the chairmanship of Shri N.K. Singh has submitted its Report on Investment and Growth in Textile Industry to the Government. The Committee has made recommendations regarding the fiscal duty structure, credit requirement and financial restructuring of the textile industry. The Government has, in the Budget proposals (2003-04), announced reduction in excise duty on Polyester Filament Yarn, all spun and other filament yarns, knitted fabric, woven fabrics, and garments, etc. Besides, customs duty on specified textile machinery items and raw materials of woollen industry has also be reduced.

Subsidies and Countervailing Duties on Indian Textiles

1534. SHRI P. PRABHAKAR REDDY: Will the Minister of TEXTILES be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the U.S. Government has threatened to impose anti-subsidy and countervailing duties on all Indian Textile and apparel products;